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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/654,951	09/05/2000	Robert A. Cordery	F-100	7627

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Charles R Malandra Jr
Pitney Bowes Inc
Intellectual Property and Technology Law Dept
35 Waterview Drive P O Box 3000
Shelton, CT 06484

EXAMINER

CHEUNG, MARY DA ZHI WANG

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 12/27/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/654,951

Applicant(s)

CORDERY ET AL.

Examiner

Mary Wang

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 September 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 September 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. Claims 1-5, 8-18, 20 and 22-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abumehdi et al., U. S. Patent 5,367,464 in view of Libman, U. S. Patent 6,076,072.

As claim 1, Abumehdi teaches a method for auditing a database comprising a plurality of records, said records each being accessible through an independent module, said method comprising the step of (abstract and Figs. 1, 3A-3B):

a) Maintaining a set of additive audit data in said module (column 4 line 64 – column 5 line 54 and Fig. 1);

- b) Controlling said module so that each module increments a set of audit data maintained in said module when a record is accessed through said module (Figs. 1-3B);
- c) Summing said sets of audit data to generate system audit data (Figs. 3A-3B);
- d) Verifying said database's integrity against said system audit data (column 5 lines 26-32 and Figs. 3A-3B).

Abumehdi does not specifically teach said records being access through a plurality of modules. Libman teaches input information go through a plurality of modules (Figs. 2-3). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add the feature of a plurality of modules to the single module of Abumehdi because it would create more options for the user to match the user's requests, such as refill the postage credit, change PIN number, updating address, etc.

As to claim 2, Abumehdi modified by Libman teaches sending a user request for access to a record and said request record to a selected a selected one of said modules; and said selected module updating said requested record in accordance with said request (Abumehdi: column 5 line 55 – column 7 line 18 and Figs. 1-3B; Libman: Figs. 2-3).

As to claim 3, Abumehdi teaches said selected module incorporates encrypted information in said record to prevent generation of fraudulent records (Figs. 2A-3B).

As to claim 4, Abumehdi teaches a request for a digital postal indicium and comprises controlling said selected module to generate and return to said requesting user a digital postal indicium in accordance with said request; and controlling said

selected module to update said request record in accordance with said request (column 1 lines 17-21 and column 2 lines 37-47 and Figs. 2A-2C).

As to claim 5, Abumehdi teaches said selected module incorporates encrypted information in said audit data to authenticate said audit data (Figs. 2A-2C).

As to claim 8, increments of a linear error correction code for correcting a field of said records, whereby said audit data can be summed to generate a system error correcting code to correct said field of said records are taught by Abumehdi as the audit data goes through error detection check, and if errors are detected, the audit data will be corrected (column 5 lines 27-32).

As to claims 11-12, Abumehdi teaches the corrected field contains a total postage amount or a total number of indicia dispensed for the corresponding record (column 5 lines 15-54).

As to claim 13, said sets of audit data comprises arithmetic totals for values stored in said field of said records, whereby arithmetic sums of said values across said modules can be compared with arithmetic sums across said records, whereby numbers of errors greater than the number which can be detected by said system error correcting code can be detected are taught by Abumehdi as the audit data comprises arithmetic totals for values stored in said field of said records, whereby arithmetic sums of said values across said modules can be compared with arithmetic sums across said records, the audit data goes through error detection check, and if errors are detected, the audit data will be corrected (column 5 lines 27-54).

As to claim 14, Abumehdi teaches the field contains a total postage amount or a total number of indicia dispensed (column 5 lines 15-54).

Claims 9-10, 15-18, 20 and 22-28 are rejected for the similar reasons as claims 1-5, 8 and 11-14.

4. Claims 6-7, 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abumehdi et al., U. S. Patent 5,367,464 in view of Libman, U. S. Patent 6,076,072 in further view of Kara et al., U. S. Patent 5,778,076.

As to claim 6, Abumehdi modified by Libman teaches the method of auditing a database as discussed above. Abumehdi modified by Libman does not specifically teach the selected module incorporates time information in said audit data. However, Kara teaches a selected module incorporates time information in the audit data (Figs. 4I-4L, 4O). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow the selected module of Abumehdi modified by Libman to include time information in the audit data so that the system can better monitor each transaction.

As to claim 7, Abumehdi modified by Libman teaches the method of auditing a database as discussed above. Abumehdi modified by Libman does not specifically teach providing security against tampering. However, Kara teaches providing security against tampering (column 15 lines 16-20). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow the method of Abumehdi modified by Libman to include the feature of against tempering because user would feel confident to make transactions via the system.

Claims 19 and 21 are rejected for the similar reasons as claims 6-7.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Lee et al. (U. S. Patent 5,742,683) discloses managing multiple users of an open metering system, and the users have different access privileges.

Windel et al. (U. S. Patent 5,805,711) discloses securing data and program code of an electronic postage meter machine against manipulation, having a microprocessor in a control unit of the postage meter machine for implementing steps for a start and initialization routine and following system routine with a possibility of entering into a communication mode with a remote data central, as well as further input steps in order to enter into a franking mode from which a branch is made back into the system routine after the implementation of an accounting and printing routine.

Ryan et al. (EP 0 854 446 A2) discloses refilling a postage metering system that includes a host coupled to a postal security device (PSD).

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Inquire

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mary Wang whose telephone number is (703)-305-0084. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday – Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell, can be reached on (703) 305-9768.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceedings is assigned are as follows:

(703) 305-7687 (Official Communications; including After Final

Communications labeled "BOX AF")

(703) 746-5619 (Draft Communications)

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, 7th Floor Receptionist.

Mary Wang
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3621
December 19, 2002

JOHN W. HAYES
John W. Hayes
Primary Examiner